


Todd, George, Dr.

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CONTEMPORARIES

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Abraham Lincoln's Contemporaries

George Todd

Excerpts from newspapers and other
sources

From the files of the
Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection

Kentucky.

By and large, Elodie Todd and N. H. R. Dawson as well were true to this standard—even to the extent of disbelieving anything they read in the newspapers which reflected poorly on Mary Todd. On July 22, 1861, she wrote one of the harshest appraisals of Mary Todd that appears anywhere in her correspondence.

I see from today's paper Mrs. Lincoln is indignant at my Brother David's being in the Confederate Service and declares "that by no word or act of hers would he escape punishment for his treason against her husband's government should he fall into their hands"—I do not believe she ever said it—and if she did & meant it she is no longer a Sister of mine, nor deserves to be called a woman of nobleness & truth & God grant my noble & brave hearted brother will never fall into their hands & have to suffer death *twice over*, and he could do nothing which would make *me prouder of him*, than he is doing *now fighting for his country*, what would she do to me do you suppose, I have so much to answer for?

Her fiancée replied with a letter which indicates that Dawson might have been less restrained in his appraisal of Lincoln had he not felt that he must be careful of Elodie's touchy Todd family pride:

I do not believe that Mrs. Lincoln ever expressed herself, as you state, about your brother David.—If she did, it is in very bad taste, and in worse temper—and unlike all the representations I have seen of her character—But you will learn, my dearest, that a wife, soon becomes wrapped up in the fortunes of her husband & will tolerate in her relations no opposition to his wishes . . . [.]

Was Dawson hinting that Elodie might some day sever her loyalties from the Todd family and share a more "objective" view of the narrow party politician in the White House?

If Dawson thought so, he was quite wrong. In a dramatic episode, Elodie proved her loyalty to the Todd family name. In December of 1861, Selma citizens staged a "Tableau," a sort of costume charade in which living people staged a motionless picture, to raise money for a local regiment. Elodie was invited and intended to go, until she saw the programme:

. . . I see my Brother-in-law Mr Lincoln is to be introduced twice I have declined as all my feeling & self respect have not taken wings & flown. I must confess that I have never been more hasty or indignant in my life than since the last step has been taken. What have we done to deserve this attempt to personally insult & wound our feelings in so public a manner. We have suffered what they never have and perhaps never will in severing ties of blood . . . [.] Dr. Kendree and Mrs Kendree last summer proposed that in one of the Tableaux we should introduce the two Scenes which they propose entertaining their audience with Tuesday night and I then in their *own home* showed the indignation that I felt at a proposition made to wound me. . . . [they wished] Mr Lincoln would be *caught & hung* . . . that was enough but I feel I can never feel kindly again toward those who take part in this, you do not know all we have taken from some of the people of this place, no not one half and *pride* has kept us from showing them what we felt, I am afraid I shall never love Selma and I feel thankful that I am not dependent on its inhabitants for my happiness, hereafter I will stay to myself and keep out of the . . . way of those to whom my presence seems to be obnoxious . . . [.]

Elodie did stay home and apparently suffered a period of ostracism which severed her relations with her neighbors in Selma. Dawson tried to smooth over the difficulty as well as he could, explaining that Lincoln had become the "personification" of the enemy, but Elodie continued to complain bitterly about Selma, much to Dawson's obvious irritation. Todd family pride was a powerful force.

The Todd Family: A Startling Revelation

Most historians have assumed that Mary Todd Lincoln took an interest in political affairs that was extraordinary for a woman in her day because politics had been such a large and natural part of the Todd family life. Her father, Robert S. Todd, had been a politician himself. Lexington, though not the state capital, was an intensely political town because one of its citizens, Henry Clay, was a long-time contender for the United States Presidency. Todd was apparently associated with local men of ambition who wished to see Clay become President. As William Townsend has shown, Todd was involved in bitter political disputes because he supported the 1833 Kentucky law forbidding the importation of slaves into the state for purposes of sale. Some supporters of the law, written at the height of anti-slavery feeling within the South itself, argued that, without fresh infusions of black population, the slave power in the state would wither and eventually emancipate the slaves. Powerful pro-slavery interests in the state fought for the repeal of the nonimportation law and gained it just before Todd's death. When he ran for office, Todd received the bitter denunciation of the pro-slavery interests for being what he was not, an emancipationist. Thus Mary and the other Todd children knew the bitterness of politics as well as the satisfactions of being a family thought worthy of representing their community's political interests. Nevertheless, it is assumed that Mary gained a love of politics from the partisan milieu of her early life.

N. H. R. Dawson debated, while in the army, whether he should become a politician or devote himself to law practice when he ended his tour of duty. In May of 1861, he asked his fiancée what her feelings were about his future career. Dutifully, Elodie replied that she would be content with either choice. "One might suppose," she said, "to behold Mr Lincoln's Political career that my family would be content with Politics I am used to such a life My Father having followed such a one himself." When he asked again, he got a very different answer from Robert S. Todd's young daughter:

As to a Political life I think almost any choice preferable and more conducive to happiness, it is a life of trials vexations & cares, and in the end a grand disappointment to all the [illeg.] & purposes of the Politician himself & of his friends, that [there ?] are a few empty honors [nor] do they compensate when gained, for the trouble of a laborious life to please the World, which does indeed turn every day your friends today, your foes tomorrow, ready to tarnish your fair name with any untruth that will serve to promote party purposes. I know my Father's life was embittered after the selection of a Political life was made by his friends for him & he accepted it and after all the sacrifices he made for them & to acquire for himself Fame & a name which lived only a few years after he slumbered in his grave, and it was well he did not live longer to plunge deeper in for every other life had lost its charm and there was but the one that added he thought to his happiness. Yet I am wrong I expect to judge all by the few I have known to be otherwise than happy in such a choice, as much depends upon disposition and any life may have proved to have had the same effect . . . [.] This is a remarkable letter which ones does not know quite how to interpret. It is, in the first place, the letter of a seventeen-year-old girl. It is, in the second place, the letter of a girl who was but five years old when her father died. Therefore, it is not altogether to be trusted.

Nevertheless, it is a unique view of a family which has remained shrouded in mystery and deserves careful consideration. It is unclear whether Robert S. Todd was truly embittered before his death (though Elodie says so) or whether the family projected their own bitterness, derived from the speed with which his fame faded after his death, onto their memory of Robert Todd. Such an interpretation would be congruent

with Elodie's statement that what name he gained faded quickly after his death and with the fact that she surely learned of this bitterness from her family long after her father's death. Probably a girl of five was unable to understand a bitterness bred of political chicanery.

Whether Elodie's view of politics and of her father's political career should cause us to reevaluate Mary Todd's alleged love of politics is a still more difficult question. Mary left home before her father engaged in the heated campaign for the state senate in 1845, in which Todd denounced his opponent as a man in a "fit of malice and desperation," "an habitual and notorious falsifier, an unscrupulous and indiscriminate calumniator, reckless alike of fame, of honor, and of truth," and a "miserable old man" who engaged in "unprovoked assaults, unfounded charges and illiberal insinuations." She was away in Springfield when her father was called by his opponent a "weak and vicious" man of "craven spirit" who worked as a legislator in the lower house to gain favors for the Branch Bank of Kentucky of which Todd was himself the president. Moreover, Robert S. Todd died in the midst of a campaign for reelection to the Kentucky Senate, and those of his family who were with him may somehow have blamed the campaigning for killing him. Especially to a child of five, it may have seemed as though whatever it was that took the father away from the house all the time on business (campaigning) simply took him away forever. From all these feelings and emotions Mary Todd Lincoln could well have

been quite immune. She may therefore have imbibed a love of politics from the early career of a father whose later career and death in the midst of campaigning left younger members of the family bitter about the profession of politics.

Other intimate glimpses of the Todd family provide interesting food for thought. Dawson seems to have been a devout man who took his Episcopalianism seriously as religion and not merely as a badge of his status in Southern society. He was distressed that Elodie, although she attended church, was not a full-fledged member. Elodie's professions of lack of adequate faith sound a bit perfunctory, but the subject appeared often enough in her letters to indicate genuine concern. "It was not necessary," she told her fiancé in a typical passage, "for you to ask me to pray for you as I have not allowed a day to pass without doing so, nor will not, altho' my prayers may not be heard & I regret each day more & more that I am not a good christian, as such my prayers might be of some avail, but I fear the life I have lead, does not entitle me to hope for much and it is so hard to be good. . . ." Dawson was quite concerned, and her reluctance in the face of urgings like this one surely betokened serious thought on the subject: ". . . I know that you have all the purity—all the essential qualifications—that would authorize you to take this step—that you are in all things, save the public confession—a christian . . . [.] There may have been some religious confusion among all the Todd children. Elodie's mother took her to the Presbyterian Church, but Elodie had gone to the Episcopal



FIGURE 2. The Todd home in Lexington is to be restored soon.

From the Lincoln National Life Foundation

Church at some time in her past. It will be remembered that Mary Todd Lincoln became a Presbyterian after her original Episcopalian affiliations. Elodie's confusion was doubtless increased by the fact that Dawson would have preferred her choosing the Episcopal Church, though he most wanted her to choose to make a full commitment for *some* church.

Elodie Todd's letters also seem to indicate that the family was a close-knit and happy one. "We have always been happy together," she told Dawson, "and never known what the feeling was that prompted others to always seek happiness away from home, and to feel miserable when compelled to remain there." Of course, Elodie did not have the experience Mary had, of gaining a new mother who was disliked by Mary's own grandmother. For Elodie, though, there was only one problematical member of the family.

Dr. George Todd is my Father's youngest son by his first marriage, but an almost total stranger to me for in my whole life I have never seen him but twice, the first time he was a practicing Physician, the next after my Father's death and owing then to some unpleasant family disturbances, there has never since existed between the older members of my family and himself & his older brother the same feeling as before or that is felt for our sisters I was too young at the time to even understand why the feeling was. When he called on [brother] David in Richmond, David would not see him or recognize him this I feel sorry for and hope they will yet make friends. . . . [.]

It was little wonder that the other Todd children hated George. Robert S. Todd had written a will, but George contested it successfully on the technical grounds that there was only one witness to the document. This was a direct blow at Robert S. Todd's widow and the second batch of children because it meant the bulk of the estate, instead of passing to Mrs. Todd, had to be liquidated and divided among all the children. It speaks well for Mrs. Todd's restraint or for Elodie's loyalty to the family name that the young girl was seemingly unaware of what George had done and hoped there would be a reconciliation between him and other members of the family. Otherwise, Elodie made no distinctions in sisterly affection for all the children, whether by the first or second marriage.

It is somewhat surprising to find a member of the Todd family so violently anti-English as Elodie was. It was almost more than she could bear to have to hope that England would intervene in the Confederacy's behalf. On February 1, 1862, she wrote Dawson that she wished "we would have Peace or that France & England would recognize us, if they intend to, I confess I have little patience left, and wish we could take our time in allowing them to recognize the Confederate States. I hope they will pay for their tardiness in giving an enormous price, but I should not be so *spiteful*, but I never could tolerate the English and will not acknowledge like some members of the Family that [we] are of English descent, I prefer being *Irish* and certainly possess some Irish traits. . . ." Not only does this passage inform us of a peculiar difference of opinion within the family in regard to England, it also reminds us of what is easy to forget: Confederate diplomacy was unnatural. Southerners, at least the Presbyterian ones, hated England as much as Northerners did, and their desire for rescue by England was pure expedience. It showed in the King Cotton theory of diplomacy as well: it was surely an odd way to make friends with England by denying her the Southern cotton she needed for her mills.

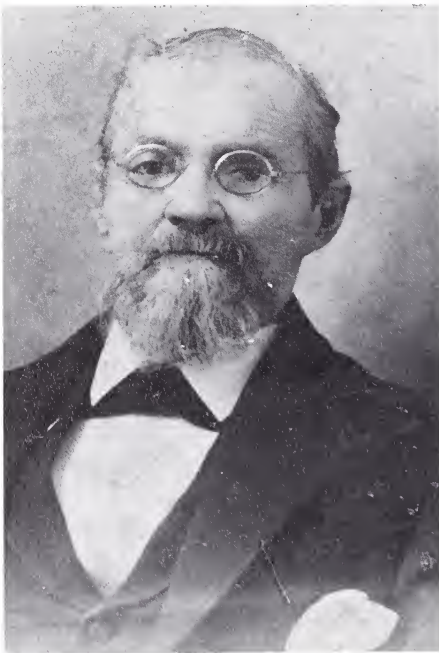
Only part of Elodie's alienation from Selma, Alabama, stemmed from her feud over the proper limits for criticizing her brother-in-law. Elodie considered herself a Kentuckian, and she had trouble all along developing any enthusiasm for her fiancée's home town in Alabama. She suffered agonies over Kentucky's reluctance to secede and join the other Confederate states. She delivered tongue-lashings to those Alabamians unlucky enough to criticize Kentucky in her pre-

sence, and she followed the career of Kentucky's John C. Breckinridge closely. Whether all the Todd children felt such an intense identification with their native state is an interesting question with interesting implications. Might Abraham Lincoln's Kentucky background have been more important to Mary Todd than we have previously realized?

EPILOGUE

N. H. R. Dawson reenlisted once his original term of service was up. He led a cavalry unit in the late part of the war. Elodie chided herself for her selfishness in wishing that he would stay home and realized that she must not interfere with her husband's sense of duty to Alabama and the Confederacy. Dawson must hardly ever have been at home in the early period of their marriage, for he attended sessions of the state legislature and led the cavalry when the legislature was in recess.

Mrs. Dawson made other adjustments to her husband's ways. She lived in Selma the rest of her life. She must also have made her peace with Mr. Dawson's interest in politics, for he never ceased to dabble in politics. She never repudiated her identification with Southern interests or her secessionist sympathies. She became a leader of the movement to erect a Confederate monument in Selma's Live Oak Cemetery. In fact, she defied her husband's dislike of female volunteer societies and became president of the Ladies' Memorial Association of Selma. One could not have predicted this assumption of leadership in Selma society in the period of her withdrawal from a society which had insulted a Todd brother-in-law. She bore N. H. R. Dawson two children. In 1877, she died and was buried near the Confederate monument she had helped to build.



Courtesy of J. Winston Coleman, Jr.

FIGURE 3. Dr. George Todd, the black sheep.

*A DIVIDED NATION, A DIVIDED FAMILY,
THE LIFE AND TIMES OF A REBEL SURGEON,
Dr. George Rodgers Clark Todd,
BROTHER OF MARY TODD LINCOLN*

By Terrance Strater RN, MPH

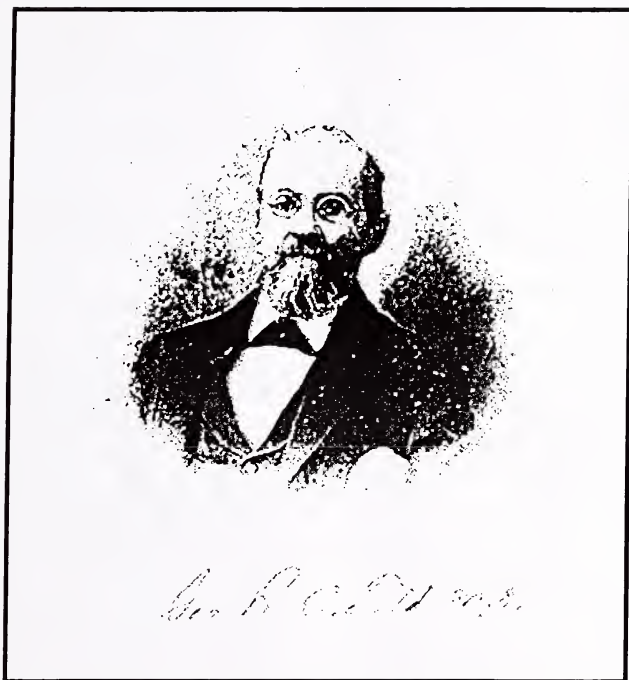


Photo provided by Lincoln Museum, Ft. Wayne, Indiana

A DIVIDED NATION, A DIVIDED FAMILY, THE LIFE AND TIMES OF A REBEL SURGEON, Dr. George Rodgers Clark Todd, BROTHER OF MARY TODD LINCOLN

By Terrance Strater RN, MPH
Birth and Family History

George Rodgers Clark Todd was born into a prosperous and founding family of Lexington, Kentucky, on July the 4, 1825. He was the seventh and last child of Robert Smith Todd and Eliza Parker Todd. His mother became a victim of childbed fever the day after he was born. The Todd house was just three blocks from the Transylvania Medical School, of which Dr. Elisha Warfield, previously professor of surgery and obstetrics at Transylvania; Dr. Benjamin Dudley, the new professor of anatomy and surgery and Dr. William Richardson, an expert on diseases of women and children, provided medical services during the illness following the birth. (Baker 1987) In spite of the expert medical men in attendance, Eliza Parker Todd died on 5 July 1825. She was never to see her children to adulthood, of which one was to become wife of a president, her last son a skilled surgeon & physician, much like the one who attended her in her last hours.

Seventeen months after her death George's father married Elizabeth (Betsey) Humphries of Frankfort, Kentucky, daughter of Dr. Humphries, originally of Virginia. An additional eight more children were born to this union leaving at the time of George's father Robert Smith Todd's death 14 surviving children in the family. The Todd family at the time of George's birth had already resided in Lexington, Kentucky since the days of the American Revolution. George's grandfather Levi Todd and his bothers, John and Robert were all born in Pennsylvania and educated by their uncle Reverend John Todd (a Princeton 1749 Graduate) in Virginia.

After the Todd boy's education and the start of the American Revolution the three brothers became officers of General George Rodgers Clark (George R.C. Todd's name sake) and proceeded to the frontier of Kentucky and Illinois. All three of the bothers were instrumental in the battles of Kaskaskia and Vincennes.

In 1782, Indians loyal to the British crown in the presence of his brothers killed Great Uncle Col. John Todd at battle of Blue Licks. Indian fighting would later be passed down to George's father Robert Smith Todd during the war of 1812 when he served as a militia captain on the Kentucky frontier. He took part in combat with the Indians with his bothers Samuel and John Todd at Frenchtown along the Maumee River. Both brothers Samuel and John Todd were wounded in the attack, and George's father Robert Smith Todd had just returned from medical leave and marriage to Eliza Parker at home in Lexington, from a bout of pneumonia. It was the many generations of military tradition in the Todd family that would later come to bear in George and other Todd family members on arrival of the War Between the States (Warren 1938)

George's early years were marked by an ever-expanding family and care of Negro servants. While his father was not known to have purchased many slaves they were for the most part ever present and on loan from his grandma Parker or inherited from other relation. Jean Baker in her book on *Mary Todd Lincoln* discusses the practice of wet nursing by Negro women of the aristocratic southern ladies. She attributes this practice to the patterns of frequent births, many occurring in less than 12-month periods. In any case, I am sure this was the case for George's survival and most likely cause of continuing Todd offspring. As education went, the Todd offspring benefited from the best education money could buy. It is not recorded, but his early years were most likely to fall into the tradition of attending the Rev. Ward School, like his sister Mary in Lexington. (Baker 1987) College education was to follow tradition, as well, at the local Transylvania University. An institution supported and founded by Todd Family members since it's foundation as a seminary in the 1780's

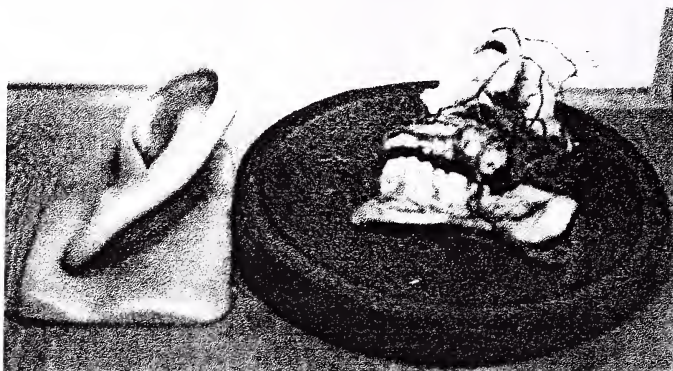
Transylvania College

Transylvania Seminary was originally chartered by Reverend John Todd in Virginia (who educated Grandfather Levi Todd) and was formally organized in 1783 with Levi Todd as a member of the board of trustee's in Lexington, KY. The original textbooks were donated by Rev. John Todd and for many years kept in Levi Todd's home. Young Robert Smith Todd (George's father) started his early education there at the age of 14 receiving a certificate verifying he had studied Mathematics, geography, rhetoric, logic, natural and moral philosophy, astronomy, Latin, Greek and history (Warren 1938). While, medicine of the 1800's was not the most illustrious of career paths to follow and by the time young George chose his path and school, it was to become a family tradition. His uncle Dr. John Todd practiced as a medical doctor after the War of 1812 on the frontier of Springfield, Illinois and was responsible for the migration of Todd relations in that later famous town. In addition to his stepmother, Betsey Humpheries's father was a practicing Physician, and lived in Lexington, KY. His Springfield brother-in-law Dr. William Wallace married his sister, Frances. Later his Lexington, Cousin Dr. Lyman Beecher Todd, would follow him. The rest of the family followed mainly, careers of politics, business and law. George's own father Robert Smith Todd was a representative in both Kentucky Houses and first president of the Bank of Kentucky. It was Robert Todd Stuart his cousin in Springfield, Illinois; a lawyer that was Abe Lincoln's first law partner, that later spawned the connection to his older sister Mary (Baker 1987)

Medical College

George's medical education followed the standard traditions of the day of two sessions 1846, 1847 and a medical thesis-1848. (B.J. Gooch 1998) Transylvania medical school was one of the better western schools of its time and one of the first west of the Alleghenies. The disputes of the school's medical faculty in the mid 1830's caused a breakaway of some of the staff to form the competing University of Kentucky Medical School in same town. (Lexington) The board of trustee's in an attempt to save the school allotted 20,00 dollars in 1838 for purchase of new medical supplies and models. Dr. Peter

one of the medical instructors went to London, England and Paris, France to purchase supplies (See Photos courtesy of Transylvania medical museum)

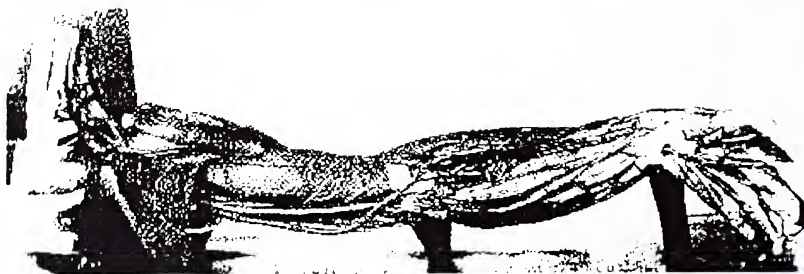


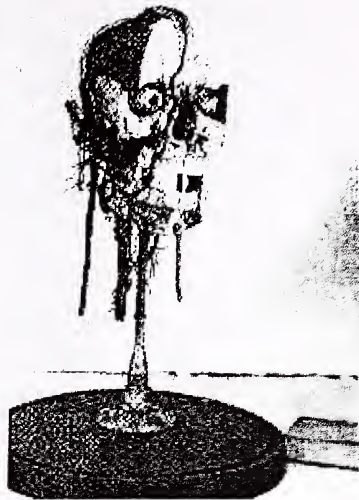
1838 anatomic models



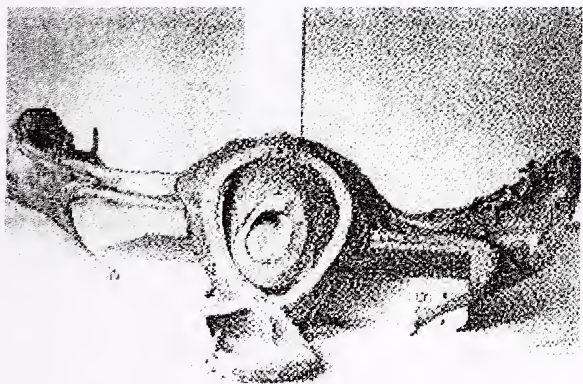
Paper mache eye and plaster head 1838 purchase

1839 wax arm model made by A. Alexandre of London, England,

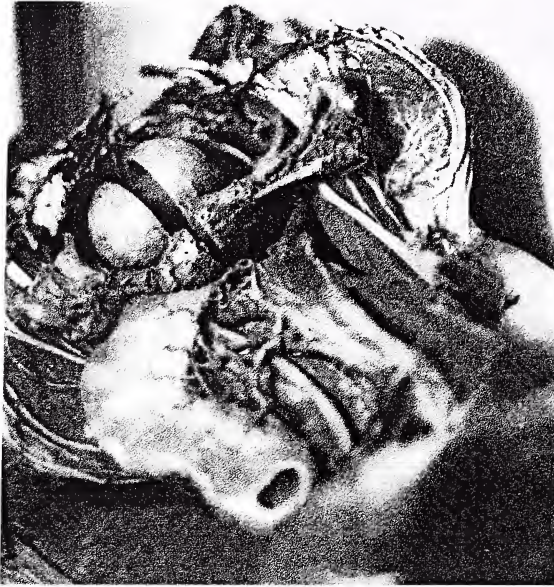




Human head 1838 purchase Paris, France



Wax pregnant uteri Auzoux model French 1838 purchase



Wax Visera model

I have noted that this must have influenced the school for many years to come as George in his medical thesis, mentions many times the differences of practitioners and schooling in Paris and Europe. I also found interesting the level of detail and quality of these anatomical models. George also discusses and advocates the use of learning of disease from autopsy in his medical thesis. He compares this to those only schooled in the observational capabilities of some medical doctors. I am sure George's Autopsy skills also aided his surgical skills later in his career. He also mentions the developments of percussion and auscultation and use of microscopes to aid in diagnosis of diseases and disorders. George in his thesis reviewed and summarized the following areas and skills for young Physicians: Experimental philosophy, Unity of action, Division of labor, Collection of facts, Extracting truth from false systems, Advanced skill in Pathology. George Todd, expressed his views on the causes yet existing to retard the march of medical sciences; the want of sufficient mental attainments in students and practitioners, the infinite variety, extent, complexity, and uncertainty of medicine, misapprehensions to the nature and objects of medical science and as to the best methods of promoting its progress and undue reverence for the past. George's requisites for students of medicine were: First he must be endowed with a native force, comprehensiveness, and clearness of intellect, to the degree enabling him to generalize the vast medley of philosophical materials, which he must acquire in the course of his practice. Secondly, that every faculty should be cultivated to the highest point of human perfectibility, so as to keep every sense on the alert to ascertain the causes of disease; and whether produced by

impalpable and unmanageable agency or peculiarity of physical circumstances. Third, That he should possess urbane and polished manners. Fourth, that he should possess that kind of physical and mental reaction usually termed Nerve or self-possession. Fifth, It is all important that a candidate for practice should possess an extensive knowledge of human nature, acquired by minute observation, critical study of character, and by habitual attention to his own motives, impulses, and modes of reasoning. For a well-qualified physician, in addition to the usual medical studies, he should be an exact chemist, geologist, mineralogist, botanist, and natural and mental philosopher. It is lack of these skills in many of his fellow practitioners and professors; he further attributes to further retarding the practice of medicine. (Todd 1848) George resided at home in his father's house, although he was not getting along with his stepmother. As a condition of remaining at home, his father paid for his medical school tuition. (Townsend 1955)

Family Ties and Problems

The year after George graduated from medical school was an eventful one for him and his family. 1849, brought the dreaded cholera to Lexington, Kentucky. It had been present in the 1830's taking Hannah Todd Stuart in 1832, George's oldest aunt and mother to John Todd Stuart, (Abe Lincoln's first law partner and future congressman from Illinois). In the Lexington Gazette the local newspaper, the editor referred to a providential affliction that the righteous would avoid, while sinners suffered. (Baker 1987) The summer of 1949 brought the worst epidemic the town would ever see. George's father John Smith Todd was out campaigning early in the summer for reelection to the state house as pro-slavery Democrat. On July 11th, He became ill and returned home to the summer home referred to as "Buena Vista" outside of Lexington. On July 16th after signing a will the previous day, he died at 1 A.M. in the morning. (Townsend 1955) The cholera allegedly also struck down George's Uncle James Clarke Todd, sheriff of Fayette county, Kentucky (Hollingsworth 1998) The epidemic also took many of Lexington's doctors. Drs Whitney, Brockway and Jones died in early July, so that by the middle of the month an appeal was made to near by towns for medical aide. The mayor of Lexington proclaimed August the 3rd, as a day of general fasting and humiliation to fervently implore the almighty for the arrest of the step of the angel of death. (Townsend 1955) The total death toll in Lexington was estimated to be over 500 (Baker 1987) In October 1849, Dr. George Todd attempted to prevent the probate of his father's will. He brought out a list of long grievances against his stepmother Betsy Humphries Todd. He claimed that he and all the children of his father's first wife were compelled to leave their father's house in consequence of the malignant and continued attempts on the part of his stepmother to poison the mind of their father toward them. (Townsend 1955) Abraham Lincoln was chosen to represent the Springfield, Illinois Todd's. George's attempt to throw out the will as it only bore the signature of one witness on the day he died was successful. The court later that month ordered the household goods to be sold at auction with the proceeds divided equally among 14 living children and George's stepmother. The house was later sold at action in 1852 (Holden 1998) Additional property sold in

1852 was the dissolution of his father's business Oldham, Heminway, Todd & Company, as well as six of the family slaves of which George claimed that they should have received a higher price. His stepmother Betsey countered with the fact that two of the slaves had been scared and in such poor condition from the abuse and beatings from his older brother Levi. George was reportedly to have taken two other slaves to live in his home because of the poor condition they were in under his brother's care, prior to their being sold on the courthouse steps. In May 1853, Levi Todd through the auspices of his father's Old Company brought a lawsuit against Abraham Lincoln claiming that he acting as a collection agent for his father's business had converted the collected funds to his personal use. Abe Lincoln quickly refuted the alleged claim and the case never proceeded to court. (Townsend 1955) Then there was the famed Todd Vs Wickliffe case. At the time of George's father's death, he had an outstanding lawsuit against "Duke" Wickliffe over settlement of Mary Todd Russell estate, which was Duke Wickliffe's second wife. She was the only daughter of George's great uncle Col. John Todd who was killed at the battle of Blue Licks in 1782. Her only son John Todd Russell, when home one summer from Princeton College took up with one of the house staff, a slave named Millie, and a son Alfred was born to her. Years later, before John Todd Russell's early death, he acknowledged publicly that Alfred was indeed his son. Later Millie and Alfred were freed in 1827 and sponsored by Kentucky colonization society to go back to Liberia, Africa. After many hard years, Alfred became a Methodist minister and second Vice president of the Republic of Liberia. In the Midst of all this, the George and Levi Todd reinstated the lawsuit on behalf of the family. They contended that the property of Col. John Todd, which included the Todd ancestral home of "Ellerslie" (This was where George's father had been born and was home of His grandfather Levi), had at the time of his death been given a tripartate deed stating that the home and property was for his wife's and daughters lifetime use and on their deaths to revert back to the Todd heirs. The first problem was that this alleged will was burned in a fire in Grandpa Levi's Home while he was county Auditor. They even provided a parson whom before that time testified seeing said will and acknowledging its contents. Then when that did not sway the court the Todd's contended that Duke Wickliffe had used undue influence in getting his wife Mary to sign over for a few thousand dollars the property to him before her death. They felt this was done over the issue of Millie and Alfred as a deal to free them and keep Col. John Todd's only grandson from becoming Duke Wickliffe's property. At the time, Duke Wickliffe owned 4,000 acres and had \$400,000 in the bank. He contended that he was not was not profiting from it with all his money. He contended that the Todd's were just after the money. The suit was not settled in court until 1859 property was passed down to Duke's daughter Mary Wickliffe Preston, lost forever to the Todd's (Baker 1987) (Townsend 1955) It was probably the many legal entanglements and personal disputes that led Dr. George R.C. Todd to refer to Abe Lincoln as that "Dammed Rascal" in later years and not just a differing view of politics. In the years following His father's death George married a local girl Anna H. Curry of neighboring Cynthiana, Kentucky. (Holden 1998) (Swick 1998) They were later divorced just before the War Between the States. According to Townsend's book, she divorced him on the grounds of cruelty. One child was born to this union, Mattie Dee Todd she remained in Cynthiana, never married and for many years was Postmistress of Cynthiana, Ky. Originally appointed with assistance from her cousin Robert Todd Lincoln, Abe Lincoln's son.(

Swick 1998) In the years after settling his father's estate George relocated to New Orleans, joining his two stepbrothers Alex and David Todd and a maternal uncle. Record searches in local medical directories and libraries at Tulane Hospital and Medical School indicated he did not practice medicine in New Orleans during this period. He may have been engaged in one of the family businesses as it was not uncommon due to heavy competition between doctors during this period, to find more lucrative business at times to support themselves and their families.

The War Years

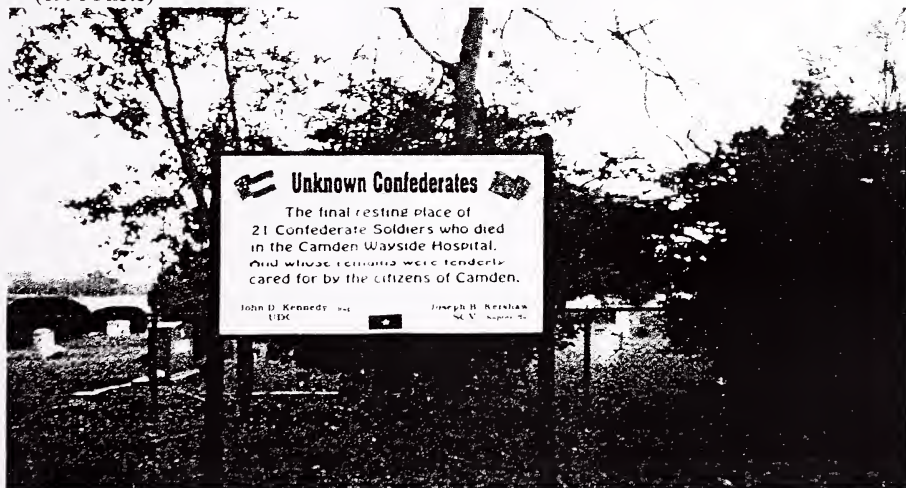
With the fall of Fort Sumter in Charleston, SC Harbor in the April of 1861, the Todd family divided just as the nation had. Sister Mary Ann Todd Lincoln and Cousin widowed Lizzie Todd Grimsley (Daughter of Dr. John Todd of Springfield, Illinois) had just taken up residence in the White House in Washington, D.C. Margaret Todd Kellogg and her husband had just returned home from attending the inauguration of her half sister's husband Abraham Lincoln. Back in Lexington, Kentucky, the Kentucky Todds were pledging their loyalties with another native born Kentuckian, Jefferson Davis, a 1824 class president and alumnus of Transylvania University. Of the Todd brothers, George, Samuel, David, and Alexander all became confederate officers, three of the half sisters were married to confederate officers. Only Levi Todd pledged to the Union, but he was so debilitated from alcoholism he was unfit for military duty. Cousins Dr. Lyman Beecher Todd (graduated Jefferson medical school Philadelphia, Pa. 1854) pledged for the Union and was appointed Postmaster of Lexington, KY. In 1861, Lyman's Brother, J. Blair Smith Todd took a Union appointment as a brigadier general. He resigned in 1862 to become the congressional delegate from Dakota Territory in Washington. Lizzie Grimsley's brother Lockwood Todd and Lincoln's brother in law William Wallace took appointments as Union officers in the Pay Department. Dr. George R.C. Todd accepted an appointment as a Confederate surgeon and reported to the medical service in Virginia. He joined half brother Captain David Todd, in charge of prison camps. Both brothers were accused of harsh treatment of union prisoners after the battle of Bull Run in summer of 1861. George was alleged to have been so brutal that he would kick the dead bodies of union soldiers, calling them "Dammed abolitionists". (Ross 1973) Several officers complained to Jefferson Davis, Confederate president, and Dr. George Todd was later assigned as surgeon to the 10th Georgia Volunteer infantry, part of the Kershaw Brigade. During the summer of 1862. According to Pvt. D.I. Walden of the 10th Georgia, Dr. Todd, cured him of a tumor of the jaw with medication, sparing him from the knife. (Spurlock 1996) In December of 1862 while camped at Zoar Church, near Fredericksburg, Virginia. It was recorded that Dr. Todd had recently purchased a keg of French brandy, failing to share it with all the 10th Georgia, several of the regiment procured it from his tent and shared it with Dr. Todd's unchosen. Upon discovering his prized keg of brandy gone, he began swearing and cussing loudly ordering up a guard to find and arrest the guilty party. The keg was located, drained of course, but no parties were arrested (Spurlock 1996). In May 1863, a captured Union Surgeon Daniel M. Holt recorded in his diary that as he was working at the Battle of Salem church in Virginia he had the pleasure of meeting and working with Dr. Todd the Brigade surgeon. He mentioned that he had the pleasure of seeing his sister, Mrs. Lincoln a few days before the battle at a corps

service. Dr. Todd replied " Well I don't know as I feel the better or worse for that. She is a poor weak-minded woman anyhow". Surgeon Holt goes on to describe, Dr. Todd as short, rather inferior looking with an impediment in his speech. A point also noted in a court proceeding in later years in Barnwell, SC. (Manning 1965) Dr. Holt wrote in his diary that during this period that whiskey was selling for 160 greenback dollars (U.S.) a gallon. One can only begin to estimate the cost of Dr. Todd's previously discussed lost brandy keg. Surgeon Holt was paroled back to the union forces after 15 days, by direct intervention of General Robert E. Lee. (Greiner Et.al 1994). The Camden, SC newspaper "The Camden Confederate May 1, 1863 edition" noted, Dr. Todd as the brigade surgeon of Kershaw's brigade (General Kershaw Commander of the Brigade was a Camden, SC native) in a field report of the battles near Fredericksburg, VA, Army Of Northern Virginia. It was reported that Dr. Todd shows himself a true man, when by affiliating with the abolitionists, and giving adherence to that government. He may have received a distinguished position from his brother in law, President Lincoln. Dr. Todd remained on field duty until September 30th 1863 when he was transferred to the General Hospital in Charleston, SC. (Jones 1894) In Charleston he was placed in charge of the First South Carolina Hospital, Rikersville, located about 4 miles from Charleston. (Waring 1967) At Rikersville, Dr. George Todd was alleged to have abused union prisoners in his care at the Hospital. A Union Lieutenant from his home state of Kentucky was said to have infuriated him so that he threw him from his hospital bunk and ordered him bucked and gagged for more than an hour. The Lieutenant died the next day. In August 1864, he was posted to the medical examining board, in Charleston. This was a command board that interviewed and approved incoming doctors for medical service and approved doctors for promotion to higher grades, such as from acting assistant surgeon, assistant surgeon, or surgeon. (Carroll 1983) In December 1864 he was in charge of the Wayside hospital, in Camden, South Carolina It was reported about 200 patients were admitted. The Wayside hospitals were a rather general term for a small local confederate hospital. Almost any town that the trains came through with wounded and had homes and buildings to put them in had a "Wayside hospital" The wayside hospital in Camden was established in January 1862 by the local Ladies Aid Society. (Kirkland & Kennedy 1926) The main part of the way side hospital in Camden was located in a large wooden building located just north of the old Mills courthouse at King and Broad streets. It was working here or at the Green Leaf Villa on Broad Street in town, a 20ish year old angel of mercy, named Martha " Mattie" Lyles met Dr. Todd, her future husband and second wife of Dr. George R.C. Todd. (Hough 1983) February 23rd 1865, Union General Sherman's Troops passed through the town and burned several buildings in town including General Kershaw's family home, which at the time was loaded with military stores. There is no mention of what became of Dr. Todd, or of his patients in any of the local accounts as written by Kirkland & Kennedy in "Historic Camden". Carl Sandburg's "Abraham Lincoln" mentions Captain Oakly of the 2nd Massachusetts Volunteers that on marching in to Cheraw, S.C., the next town looted by Sherman's troops that the town railings and the remains of a buggy said to belong to Dr. Todd, was reduced to kindling to boil coffee for the troops. But, when General Potter's union troops returned on April 15, 1865, they captured all of the rebel sick and wounded numbering from three to four hundred as reported by Sgt. W.N. Collins, 54th Mass. Inf. April 30, 1865, in a letter to Boston newspapers. No mention was made of the whereabouts or capture of Dr. Todd.



1998 Photo of Mills Court House Camden, SC,
 Wayside Hospital located just north Of here in 1862-1865

Unknown Wayside Hospital Patients, Burial Lot, Quaker Cemetery, Camden, SC
 (1998 Photo)



The war brought much sadness and loss to the Todd family. Half-brothers Samuel, and Alexander were killed in battle. Brother David a Mexican war veteran, was mortally wounded and returned home and died in 1866. Two of his half sister's husband's were killed as well, Emily Todd Helm, and Martha Todd White. George's brother Levi died of alcoholism & destitute in late 1864, his last letter to his sister, Mary Todd Lincoln, in November reporting the successful reelection campaign run by, Reverend Breckinridge, in Lexington, Ky. Reverend Breckinridge a Republican, who interestingly was father to Vice-president John C. Breckinridge, who was vice-president to President Buchanan, the last president before Lincoln. It was also his last official duty in the Senate to announce Lincoln's election. His son, the former vice president sided with the Confederacy and served as a Confederate officer. Levi in addition to reporting his and Reverend Breckinridge's successful conversion of Lexingtonian's to Lincoln in the 1864 election, asked for money to support himself through the upcoming hard winter. (Townsend 1955) On April 14, 1865 Abraham Lincoln was shot at Ford's theater. Among the ten doctors in attendance to Lincoln his last hours, was Dr. Lyman Beecher Todd, Mary Todd Lincoln's cousin. Also visiting the last hours was Lyman's brother, J. Blair Smith Todd. (Freeman 1993) (Kunhardt 1992) By June 1865, the War Between the States was over. Dr. Todd during this period was noted for his surgical ability in amputating at the hip. A surgical procedure that according to union medical records carried a mortality of 88%. In the confederate army it is estimated that 94,000 died of battle wounds and 164,000 died of disease, A total loss of almost 20% of all southern troops. Union forces lost 110,000 in battle and 224,000 from disease with over 12% loss of life from those serving. (Dammann 1988)



Civil war era style field medical Kit and supplies, collection of the author, T. Strater

After 1865, Dr. George Todd, after a short engagement, married Martha Lyles. Her sister Sallie married Former Confederate Surgeon Edwin Hughes. Martha and Sallie Lyles's father had died in 1863 leaving his home to his daughters. In February, 1868, Dr. George R. C. Todd, purchased from the Lyles heirs their father's home on Broad and Lytleton streets. In November, he sold it to his brother in law Dr. Edwin Hughes. The house still stands today and is known as the Reynolds home named for the builder of the home in 1816. (See photo)



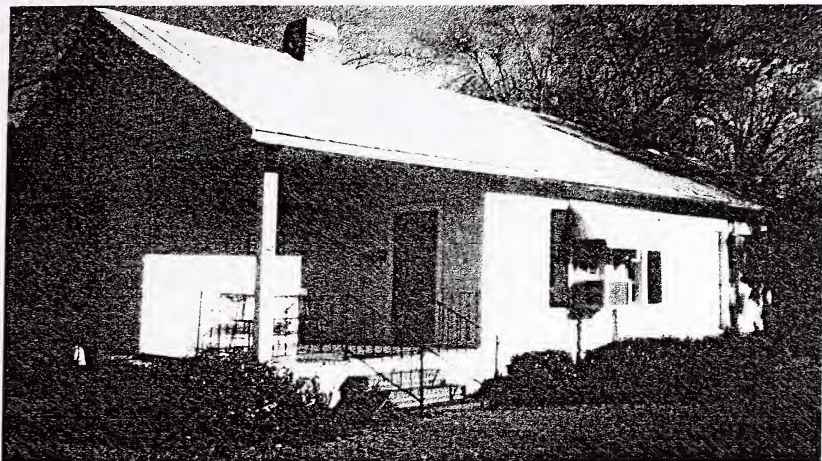
Reynolds House, Dr. Todd's residence in Camden, SC. As seen in 1998

Some time after it was sold to his brother in law, Dr. Hughes and by 1872 Dr. Todd and his wife moved to Barnwell, SC about 75 miles South west of Columbia, SC. It was here Dr. Todd lived and practiced medicine for the last 30 years of his life.

The Barnwell Years

Dr. and Mrs. Todd moved to the farming community of Barnwell, SC. Before or around 1872 they purchased a home in town one block from the county courthouse, on Washington and Jackson streets. Then, Dr. Todd set about starting up a medical practice in a town almost burned to the ground in 1865, by Sherman's troops. At first Dr. Todd was not well liked because of his rough, brusque, and uncouth manner, attributed to his years in the Confederate army. However, the town became tolerant of him and trusted in his medical expertise. He was frequently regarded as a cure them or kill them kind of practitioner, with cures out numbering the failures. As was common many waited until late in their illness to call a doctor. Dr. Todd would frequently scold them saying "You must think I am Lord almighty, Why did you wait until you are almost dead before you sent for me?" (Hough 1983) During His years in Barnwell, he started a family, a daughter was said, to have born but died before the age of two. (Jenkins 1998) and a son George Jr. Born 1870, who became his only surviving heir. During the typhoid epidemics in 1870's in nearby Blackville and Barnwell, SC, He was noted for his Quinine treatments for this and pneumonia. In September 1876, Dr. Todd was a Surgeon during the race riots in nearby Ellenton, SC. (Manning 1965) These riots were brought about by the ongoing political strife caused by reconstruction and election campaign of Wade Hampton, approximately 40-50 people lost their lives in this one riot alone. (Wallace 1951). Dr. Todd's longest lived and some would say most successful case was Henry Hayes. Mr. Hayes was born in 1880 and lived to be around 112 just passing away some time in 1996. As a child, he was rather sickly. Dr. Todd, who made home visits, told Henry's parents he had done all he could do for Henry. "Put him in God's hands and then recommend to give him some tobacco to chew". (Barnwell County Heritage 1994) Ms. Ellen Jenkins, The county Librarian who served a five-year stint as a reporter for the Barnwell newspaper and once interviewed Mr. Hayes said that his medical problem was one of parasites-"worms". I guess the chewing tobacco part cured it, as Henry never gave it up. Dr. Todd to increase and keep up a steady business In Barnwell, instituted the practice of charging \$50 a year to take care of an entire family. Sounds to me a bit like managed care, only a hundred years before it became more popular. In their later years Dr. And Mrs. Todd were known for their lovely rose gardens around their home .On July 5, 1889, Mrs. Todd passed away suddenly, born in 1841, she was 48 years old. Dr. Todd., went on to live another 11 years practicing medicine in Barnwell, SC. George B. Todd, his son , left home at an early age and frequently traveled about the country. He was noted to have lived for a while with Robert Todd Lincoln, son of Abraham Lincoln, in Chicago, Ill. By trade, George B. Todd, was an inventor, telegraph operator and Depot agent. He married Harriet Irene Ashley, Daughter of wealthy landowners, of Ellenton, SC area. Of this, union 5 children were known to have been born, Robert Todd, Lincoln Todd, Henry Paul Todd, Martha Todd & Margaret Todd. (Manning 1965) In 1900 at the time of Dr. Todd's death, He was noted to have been living in Pueblo, Colorado. Dr. George R.C. Todd's relations with his son were strained over the years, it is said of Dr. Todd that he rarely got along with adults or relation during his life. In an interesting meeting, and tour of her home, Mrs. Ethel Hogg, who has lived in Dr. Todd's last home and Medical office, for the last 55 years, notes at varying times seeing a shadowy figure frequently roaming the

house late at night. It would appear that in reviewing Dr. Todd's personal life over the years he might have had a few events to keep him restless. (See Photo of Barnwell house)



Dr. Todd's Medical office and last residence in Barnwell, SC as it appears in 1998

She also related that when she first lived in the home in the 1940's Mrs. McNab, one of the neighbors, who knew Dr. Todd as a child, recalled that he loved children, but rarely got along with adults. She reported that it was Dr. Todd's practice to have the neighborhood children over and help him fill his famed quinine capsules. In Dr. Todd's will, he bequeathed a ruby ring to a Louise Porter, a little girl of his executor for his will. On Dr. Todd's death on April 27, 1900, It would later be George B. Todd, his son who would settle the estate; Mr. Porter having refused to perform said duties. According to Mrs. Hogg, it was Louise Porter Lightsly, the little girl who received the ruby ring who ended up with his medical instruments and household furnishings. George B. Todd, his son, remained in South Carolina after his father's death for a number of years. In 1918, the flu epidemic (which killed 20 million worldwide)(McNeill 1976) took his wife Harriet Ashley Todd and one or two of the children. In 1920, George B. Todd left Port Royal, SC with the remaining children except Henry Paul Todd. Henry Todd was mentally handicapped and was cared for by several members of the Bush family, relations to his mother's family. For many years Robert Todd Lincoln (Abraham Lincoln's son), and family sent money for Henry's support. According to Ellen Jenkins, the Barnwell county librarian, Henry died some time in the 1970's, as she recalled attending the funeral. According to Gerald Swick, a Todd family historian George B. Todd resided in Lexington, KY for a brief spell, then moved away, whereabouts of him and the remaining family members is unknown.



Dr. Todd's grave marker Quaker Cemetery, Camden, SC

Erected in 1940's by Lyles and Hughes family members

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Terrance Strater, Assistant Surgeon 20th SCV

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